

# **Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program**

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## **FY 2007 Request for Applications**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: December 28, 2006**



**U.S. Department of Agriculture**



**Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service**

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**TRIBAL COLLEGES RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM**

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE:** This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.227.

**DATES:** Applications must be received by close of business (COB) on December 28, 2006 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding. Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within six months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

**STAKEHOLDER INPUT:** The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is requesting comments regarding this RFA from any interested party. These comments will be considered in the development of the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and will be used to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). This section requires the Secretary to solicit and consider input on a current RFA from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, education and extension for use in formulating future RFAs for competitive programs. Written stakeholder comments on this RFA should be submitted in accordance with the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice.

Written stakeholder comments should be submitted by mail to: Policy, Oversight, and Funds Management Staff; Office of Extramural Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; USDA; STOP 2299; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, DC 20250-2299; or via e-mail to: [RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:RFP-OEP@csrees.usda.gov). (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program (TCRGP) RFA.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** CSREES requests applications for TCRGP for fiscal year (FY) 2007 to assist the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions in conducting agricultural research that addresses high priority concerns of tribal, national or multi-state significance. The anticipated amount available for support of this program in FY 2007 is approximately \$1,000,000.

This notice identifies the objectives for TCRGP projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a TCRGP grant. CSREES additionally requests stakeholder input from any interested party for use in the development of the next RFA for this program.

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### **PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

## **A. Legislative Authority and Background**

Section 1405 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended (7 U.S.C. 3121), designates the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as the lead Federal Agency for agricultural research, extension, and teaching in the food and agricultural sciences. Authority for this program is contained in the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), as amended by the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601 note). In accordance with the statutory authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary of Agriculture may award competitive grants, as defined in section 536 of the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), to assist the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions in conducting agricultural research that addresses high priority concerns of tribal, national or multi-state significance.

## **B. Purpose and Priorities**

The TCRGP is a competitive grants program supporting agricultural research projects that address high priority concerns of tribal, national or multi-state significance. The program funds investigative and analytical studies and experimentation in the food and agricultural sciences (as defined in section 1404 of the NARETPA (7 U.S.C. 3103) and Part VIII, E. of this RFA). TCRGP seeks to advance the body of knowledge in the basic and applied natural and social sciences within the food and agricultural sciences.

## **C. Program Area Description**

Eligible institutions may propose projects in any discipline(s) of the food and agricultural sciences. Examples of initiatives that TCRGP might support include, but are not limited to:

1. Research on human nutrition, sustainable agriculture, sustainable forestry, biotechnology, agribusiness management and marketing, or aquaculture;
2. Conducting plant and animal breeding programs to develop better crops, forests, or livestock (e.g., more disease resistant, more productive, yielding higher quality products);
3. Conceiving, designing, and evaluating new bio-processing techniques to eliminate undesirable constituents from, or add desirable ones to, food products;
4. Proposing and evaluating ways to enhance utilization of the capabilities and resources of food and agricultural institutions to promote rural development (e.g., facilitating small rural businesses' exploitation of new technologies;
5. Identifying control factors that influence consumer demand for agricultural products;
6. Research on natural resource issues, phytomediation of soils, water quality, and ecology of grasslands or animal systems; and,

7. Other high priority areas such as analyzing social, economic, and physiological aspects of nutrition; rural housing and lifestyle choices; or rural community strategies for meeting the changing needs of different population groups.

Applicants are encouraged to submit joint project applications that will result in building linkages with other institutions that have significant, ongoing commitments to research on the food and agricultural sciences generally, and to the specific subject area(s) targeted by the proposed project. The goals of the joint project initiatives should include: (1) maximizing the use of limited resources by generating a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a targeted area(s); (2) increasing cost-effectiveness through achieving economies of scale; (3) strengthening the scope and quality of a project's impact; and, (4) promoting coalition-building that is likely to transcend the project and lead to future ventures.

TCRGP encourages projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension ([http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE\\_SUMMARY\\_-\\_March\\_14%2C\\_2006\\_-\\_YEAR\\_2.pdf](http://about.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/51/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_-_March_14%2C_2006_-_YEAR_2.pdf)). This content is for end users, as opposed to staff development, and must align with the eXtension Implementation Plan (available at <http://about.extension.org/wiki/Planning>). Funds may be used to contribute to existing Communities of Practice (COPs) ([http://about.extension.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_eXtension\\_Terms#Community\\_of\\_Practice\\_28CoP.29](http://about.extension.org/wiki/Glossary_of_eXtension_Terms#Community_of_Practice_28CoP.29);) or form new COPs that may focus on ***Stakeholder/Land Grant Institutions Partnership: Integrated Research, Extension and Education*** (for examples of developing COPs and guidance on forming COPs, see [http://cop.extension.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://cop.extension.org/wiki/Main_Page)).

## **PART II—AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. CSREES anticipates that approximately \$1,000,000 will be available to fund applications in FY 2007.

### **B. Types of Applications**

In FY 2007, applications may be submitted to the TCRGP as one of the following three types of requests:

**(1) New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the TCRGP. All new applications will be reviewed competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

**(2) Renewal application.** This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications, and additionally must contain a Progress Report (see Part IV, B.1.b.(a)2., Project Justification). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

**(3) Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the TCRGP but not funded. Project Directors are required to respond to the previous review panel summary (up to one page only) in the application. Failure to respond to previous review will affect the application evaluation by the review panel accordingly (see Part IV, B.1.b.(a)2., Project Justification). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

### **C. Project Types**

There are no limitations on the number of applications that may be submitted by an eligible institution as defined in Part III, A. However, institutions are encouraged to establish mechanisms that limit their submissions to high quality applications that have great potential to improve research programs. Project periods may range from 24 to 36 months. An institution may be awarded a maximum of one grant as the lead institution on a project application. There are no limitations on the number of sub-awards to joint partners or cooperators on project applications (see Part VIII, E. Definitions).

#### **1. Regular Project Application**

In a regular project application, the applicant proposes to execute the project as part of a cooperative agreement with at least one 1862 or 1890 Land Grant Institution. Applicants may request up to \$75,000 (total, not per year).

## **2. Joint Project Application**

In a joint project application, the applicant proposes to execute the project as part of a cooperative agreement with at least one 1862 or 1890 Land-Grant Institution, and assistance from at least one joint partner. A joint partner may include a college or university, unit of State or Tribal Government, other Tribal College or University, or private sector organization with a demonstrable capacity or organize and conduct research. Applicants may request up to \$150,000 (total, not per year). (See Joint Project Application under Part VIII, E. for additional information, especially relating to budget percentages for each involved institution).

## **PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

1. Applications may be submitted by any of the thirty-three 1994 Land-Grant Institutions. The 1994 Land-Grant Institutions are: Bay Mills Community College, Blackfeet Community College, Cankdeska Cikana Community College, Chief Dull Knife College, College of Menominee Nation, Crownpoint Institute of Technology, D-Q University, Diné College, Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College, Fort Belknap College, Fort Berthold Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Haskell Indian Nations University, Institute of American Indian Arts and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, Leech Lake Tribal College, Little Big Horn College, Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska Indian Community College, Northwest Indian College, Oglala Lakota College, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Salish Kootenai College, Si Tanka/Huron University, Sinte Gleska University, Sisseton Wahpeton Community College, Sitting Bull College, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Stone Child College, Tohono O'odham Community College, Turtle Mountain Community College, United Tribes Technical College, and White Earth Tribal and Community College.

Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

#### **2. Cooperative Agreement Requirement**

TCRGP applicants must perform proposed research under a Cooperative Agreement with at least one 1862 or 1890 Land-Grant Institution (section 536 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note)) to enhance collaborative research in the food and agricultural sciences. This does not preclude 1994 Land-Grant Institutions from partnering and submitting joint project applications.

The cooperative agreement must bear the signatures of the PD at the 1994 land-grant institution and the Authorized Representative (AR) of each cooperating institution. The document must (1) indicate a cooperating institution's willingness to commit support to the project and (2) identify an individual at the cooperating institution who will serve as the primary liaison or technical contact for the project.

Specifically, this document should describe the nature of the 1862 or 1890 land-grant institution's involvement, including its role in: (a) identifying the need for the project; (b) developing a conceptual approach; (c) assisting with project design; (d) identifying and securing needed resources (e.g., personnel, grants/contracts; in-kind support); (e) developing the project budget; (f) promoting partnerships with other institutions to carry out the project; (g) helping the institution launch and manage the project; (h) providing technical assistance and expertise; (i) providing consultation through site visits, email, conference calls, and faxes; (j) participating in project evaluation and dissemination of final project results; (k) seeking other innovative ways to ensure the success of the project and advance the needs of the institution or the agency. In addition, the cooperative agreement should describe the expected benefits of the partnership



venture for all of the parties involved and name(s) of cooperator(s) with institutional affiliation and percentage time to be allotted to the proposed effort.

An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of an application deadline will result in CSREES returning the application without a review.

#### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

CSREES does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

## PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### A. Address to Request Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to CSREES in response to this RFA.

Prior to preparing an application, it is suggested that the PD/PI first contact an Authorized Representative (AR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grant.gov. If the organization is not prepared, the AR should see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) for steps for preparing to submit applications through Grants.gov.

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See [http://www.grants.gov/resources/download\\_software.jsp#pureedge](http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge).
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “**Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions**,” enter the funding opportunity number, USDA-CSREES-TCRGP-000246, in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

**If assistance is needed to access the application package** (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support  
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726  
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

See <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

### B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

**Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3 of the Guide.**

1. R&R Other Project Information Form.

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form). Briefly summarize the project objectives and include all measurable project outcomes. The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of the TCRGP.

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form).

PLEASE NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed 20 pages of written text and up to five additional pages for figures and tables. This maximum of 25 pages has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

**(a) Significance of the Problem.**

1. **Project Impact.** Clearly identify and explain how the proposed research project will address high priority concerns of tribal, national or multi-state significance. Briefly explain the project’s anticipated, overall impact on advancing food and agricultural research and knowledge. Present the research questions or hypotheses to be examined.
2. **Project Justification.** Provide a rationale for the proposed approach to the problem or opportunity. Include a comprehensive summary of the pertinent scientific literature. Summarize the body of knowledge or other past activities which substantiate the need for the proposed project. Citations should be footnoted and appear in a bibliography at the end of Project Narrative. (The bibliography does NOT count towards the 25 page limitation.) Explain how current knowledge (or previous findings) relate to the proposed project. Describe the relevancy of the proposed project to current research, including unpublished research, at the applicant institution and any cooperating institutions. A renewal application must include a Progress Report (1-2 pages only). The Progress Report ascertains the importance and significance of continuing the proposed renewed project to further elaborate previous and/or ongoing successful results or impacts for the benefit of the target audience, research, U.S., and the world. A one page response to the previous review panel’s summary is required for a resubmitted application. (See Part II, B., Types of Applications.)

This section should also include in-depth information on the following, when appropriate:

- i. Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and to ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural science research, education, and extension programs.
  - ii. Role of the stakeholders in problem identification, planning, and implementation and evaluation as appropriate.
  - iii. Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.
- 3. Innovation.** Describe the degree to which the application reflects an innovative or non-traditional approach to a food and agricultural research initiative.
- 4. Multi-disciplinary and/or Problem-based Focus.** Indicate: (a) how the project is relevant to multiple disciplines in food and agricultural sciences or other research programs; (b) where the project expands inter-disciplinary collaborations; and, (c) how the project advances solutions to real world problems. Discuss whether the project may be adapted by, or serve as a research model for other institutions.

**(b) Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages.**

- 1. Objectives.** Cite and discuss clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) or specific objectives of specific aims to support the long-term goals of the proposed effort.
- 2. Methods and Plan of Operation:** Explicitly describe and state procedures or methodologies to be applied to the proposed project. Include descriptions of: (a) proposed investigations, proposed project activities or experiments in the sequence in which they will be carried out; (b) procedures and techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in the project; (c) kinds of results expected and means by which data will be collected and analyzed; (d) details of plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public; (f) pitfalls that might be encountered; and, (g) limitations to proposed procedures. This section should also include, as appropriate, a description of stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation.
- 3. Timetable.** Provide a timetable for execution of the project. Identify all important research milestones and dates as they relate to project start-up, execution, dissemination, evaluation, and close-out.
- 4. Products, Results, and Measurable Outcomes.** Explain the expected products and results and their potential impact (outcome) on strengthening food and agricultural sciences research in the United States. “Products” may be actual items or services acquired or produced with project funds. “Results” are intended (or unintended) consequences of the project. “Outcomes/Impacts” are a measure of the results by comparing what occurred as a result of the project with what might have happened in the absence of the project.
- 5. Evaluation Plans.** Provide a plan of evaluating the accomplishment of stated objectives during the project period. Specify indicators of progress and measurable outcomes.

Describe any performance data to be collected and analyzed, and explain the methodologies that will be used to determine the extent to which the needs underlying the project are being met. Provide a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of end results upon conclusion of the project.

- 6. Dissemination Plans.** Discuss plans for disseminating project results and products including the possibilities for publications. Identify target audiences and explain methods of communication.
- 7. Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts.** Cooperative, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary applications are encouraged. Identify each institutional unit contributing to the project and designate the lead institution or institutional unit. When appropriate, the project should be coordinated with the efforts of other state and/or national programs. Using the Cooperative Agreement (described in Part III A.2.) as a basis, clearly describe and define the programmatic roles, responsibilities and budget for each institutional partner: (1) the nature of the arrangements between the applicant institution and the cooperating 1862 or 1890 Land Grant Institution; (2) how each institution will enhance the proposed research project; and, (3) how the potential of the project will advance cooperative ventures between the applicant institution and the cooperating 1862 or 1890 Land Grant Institution.

Also, explain how the project will maximize other partnership ventures and collaborative efforts to strengthen food and agricultural sciences research (e.g., involvement of faculty in related disciplines at the same institution, joint projects with other colleges and universities, or cooperative activities with business or industry). Also, explain how the project will stimulate academia, Tribal government, or the private sector in enhancing food and agricultural sciences research.

**(c) Institutional Commitment, Resources, and Continuation Plans.**

- 1. Institutional Commitment.** Discuss the applicant institution's commitment to the project and its successful completion. Also, discuss how the benefits to be derived from the project will transcend the applicant institution or the project period. Substantiate that the institution attributes a high priority to the project. Discuss how the project will contribute to the achievement of the applicant institution's long-term (5- to 10-year) goals and how the project will help satisfy the applicant institution's high-priority objectives. Show how this project is linked to and supported by the applicant institution's strategic plan.
- 2. Institutional Resources.** Discuss the commitment of institutional resources to the project, including facilities, equipment, and computer services. Show that the institutional resources that will be made available to the project represent a sound commitment and that, when combined with the support requested from USDA, these resources will be adequate to carry out proposed project activities. All facilities which are available for use or assignment to the project during the requested period of support should be reported and described briefly. All items of major equipment or instrumentation available for use or assignment to the proposed

project should be itemized. In addition, items of non-expendable equipment needed to conduct and bring the project to a successful conclusion should be listed, including dollar amounts and, if funds are requested for their acquisition, justified.

- 3. Continuation Plans.** Discuss the likelihood of, or plans for, continuation or expansion of the project beyond the period of USDA support. Discuss, as applicable, how the applicant institution's long-range budget, and administrative and academic plans, provide for the realistic continuation or expansion of the line of research or research support activity proposed in this project after the grant period ends. For example, are there plans for securing non-federal support for the project; is there any potential for income from patents, technology transfer or university-business enterprises as a result of the project? Also, discuss the probabilities of the proposed activity or line of inquiry being pursued by researchers at other institutions.
- 4. Cost-effectiveness.** Justify the project's cost-effectiveness. Show how the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes research value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, or leverages additional funds. For example, discuss how the project has the potential to generate a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a targeted need area, or to promote coalition building that could lead to future ventures.

c. Cooperative Agreement (Field 11 on the Form). Attach the required Cooperative Agreement as set forth in Part III, A.2. of this RFA.

## **2. R&R Budget**

Budget Justification (Field K on the Form). If an institution's indirect cost rate has expired or will expire in the near future, a clear statement on renegotiation efforts must be submitted. Attach this statement as part of the Budget Justification.

## **3. CSREES Supplemental Information Form**

a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name, "Tribal Colleges Research Grants Program," and the program code, "ZY."

## **C. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications must be received by COB on December 28, 2006 (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by email. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate email addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Program Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA (for the Small Business Innovation Research program (SBIR) the Program Contacts are

specified under subsection 1.5 of the SBIR Program Solicitation) and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in (for competitive programs) the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel or (for non-competitive programs) a delay in the issuance of an award. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

#### **D. Funding Restrictions**

CSREES has determined that grant funds may not be used for the renovation or refurbishment of research, education, or extension space; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such space; or the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

The FY 2006 Appropriations Act limited indirect costs to 20 percent of the total Federal funds provided under each award. CSREES anticipates that the FY 2007 Appropriations Act will include a similar limitation. Therefore, when preparing budgets, applicants should limit their requests for recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of the institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 20 percent of the total Federal funds awarded. Another method of calculating the maximum allowable is 25 percent of the total direct costs. Please note that if the 2007 Appropriations Act contains a different indirect cost limitation, CSREES will contact each successful applicant to apply the correct rate prior to the award of the grant.

#### **Special Notices (Applicable to Grantees and Subcontractors)**

1. CSREES will withhold all funds for a TCRGP award to an applicant requesting indirect costs if the applicant has not negotiated an indirect cost rate with its cognizant Federal agency.
2. If a grantee is in the process of negotiating an indirect cost rate with its cognizant Federal agency, CSREES will withhold all funds from that grantee until the indirect cost rate has been established.
3. If an institution's indirect cost rate has expired or will expire in the near future, a clear statement on renegotiation efforts must be included in the application. (See Part IV, B.2., Budget Justification, above.)
4. It is incumbent on all applicants to have a current indirect cost rate or begin negotiations to establish an indirect cost rate prior to the TCRGP submission deadline. Because it may take several months to obtain an indirect cost rate, applicants needing an indirect cost rate are encouraged to start work on establishing these rates well in advance of submitting a TCRGP application.
5. In lieu of requesting indirect costs, an applicant may prepare a budget in which all charges in the budget are included as direct costs.

#### **E. Other Submission Requirements**

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled, “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants. Gov.”



## **PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. General**

Each application will be evaluated in a 2-part process. First, each application will be screened to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, applications that meet these requirements will be technically evaluated by a review panel.

Reviewers will be selected based upon training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and Federal agencies, private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness to producers and the general public of each application.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria below will be used in reviewing applications submitted in response to this RFA:

#### **1. Significance of the Problem (30 points).**

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will advance or have a substantial impact upon the body of knowledge constituting the natural and social sciences, which undergird the agricultural, natural resources, and food systems. Elements considered include identification of a problem or opportunity to be addressed, justification for the project, innovation (creative programs, material or curricula), and a multi-disciplinary and/or problem-based focus.

#### **2. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages (25 points).**

This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach and the quality of the partnerships likely to evolve as a result of the project. Elements include objectives, methodology, plan of operation, timetable, expected products and results (including measurable outcomes), evaluation plans, dissemination plans, and partnerships and collaborative efforts. Emphasis is partnerships and cooperative linkages.

#### **3. Institutional Commitment and Resources (20 points).**

This criterion relates to the applicant institution's degree of commitment to the project, both during and beyond the period of USDA support. Elements include the applicant institution's

commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources available to carry out the project, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support.

#### **4. Key Personnel (15 points).**

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of the key persons who will carry out the project, including personnel involved in project technical performance and administration, assessment of results and impacts, and dissemination of findings.

#### **5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness (10 points).**

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes research value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, leverages additional funds, focuses expertise and activity on a high-priority research initiative(s), and promotes coalition building for current or future ventures.

### **C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality**

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution shall be determined by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 6400 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 648, Falls Church, Virginia 22042. Phone: (703) 532-2300. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, will be kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

### **D. Organizational Management Information**

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis, as part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another CSREES program. CSREES will provide copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors which may exclude an applicant from receiving Federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

## **PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. General**

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official of CSREES shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the awarding official of CSREES as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by CSREES under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, the regulations, the terms and conditions of the award, the applicable Federal cost principles, and the Department's assistance regulations (parts 3015 and 3019 of 7 CFR).

### **B. Award Notice**

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum, the following:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to whom the Administrator has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PD's chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number assigned by the Department;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the Administrator during the project period;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view CSREES award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by CSREES to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

### **C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Several Federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to:

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

7 CFR Part 3015—USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, implementing OMB directives (i.e., OMB Circular Nos. A-21 and A-122, now codified at 2 CFR Parts 220 and 230) and incorporating provisions of 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308 (formerly the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Pub. L. No. 95-224), as well as general policy requirements applicable to recipients of Departmental financial assistance.

7 CFR Part 3017—USDA implementation of Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and 7 CFR Part 3021—Governmentwide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

7 CFR Part 3018—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of Federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

7 CFR Part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non profit Organizations.

7 CFR Part 3407—CSREES procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in Federally assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

## **D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

### **1. Project Directors Conference**

During the tenure of a grant, Project Directors must attend at least one national Administrators' meeting, if offered, in Washington, D.C., or any other announced location, or a similar conference that purposes to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for education reform, research project management, advancing the fields of agricultural or food science, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results.

### **2. Annual Performance Report**

An Annual Performance Report must be submitted to the USDA program contact person within 90 days after the completion of the first year of the project, and annually thereafter during the life of the grant. Generally, the Annual Performance Reports should include a summary of the overall progress toward project objectives, current problems or unusual developments, the next year's activities, and any other information that is pertinent to the ongoing project or which may be specified in the terms and conditions of the grant. These reports are in addition to the annual Current Research Information System (CRIS) reports required for all research grants under the terms and conditions of the award (see item 4., below).

### **3. Final Technical Report**

A Final Technical Report must be submitted to the USDA program contact person within 90 days after the expiration date of the project. The expiration date is specified in the award documents and modifications thereto, if any. Generally, the Final Technical Report should be a summary of the completed project, including: a review of project objectives and accomplishments; a description of any products and outcomes resulting from the project; activities undertaken to disseminate products and outcomes; partnerships and collaborative ventures that resulted from the project; future initiatives that are planned as a result of the project; the impact of the project on the Project Director(s), students, the departments, the institution, and the food and agricultural sciences higher education system; and data on project personnel and beneficiaries. The Final Technical Report should be accompanied by samples or copies of any products or publications resulting from, or developed by, the project. The Final Technical Report also must contain any other information which may be specified in the terms and conditions of the award.

### **4. Current Research Information System (CRIS) Reports**

Grant recipients are required to submit annual and summary evaluation reports via the CSREES Current Research Information System (CRIS). CRIS is an electronic, Web-based inventory system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

## **5. Other Reports**

Grantees should be aware that CSREES may, as a part of its own program evaluation activities, carry out in-depth evaluations of assisted activities. Thus, grantees should be prepared to cooperate with CSREES personnel, or persons retained by CSREES, evaluating the institutional context and the impact of any supported project. Grantees may be asked to provide general information on any students and faculty supported, in whole or in part, by a grant awarded under this program. Information that may be requested includes, but is not limited to, standardized academic achievement test scores, grade point averages, academic standing, career patterns, age, race/ethnicity, gender, citizenship, and disability.

## **PART VII—AGENCY CONTACT**

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Salei'a Afele-Fa'amuli, National Program Leader; Multicultural Alliances Programs; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2251; 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.; Washington, D.C. 20250-2251; telephone: (202) 720-0384; fax: (202) 720-4924; e-mail: [sfaamuli@csrees.usda.gov](mailto:sfaamuli@csrees.usda.gov).

## **PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Access to Review Information**

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

### **B. Use of Funds; Changes**

#### **1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility**

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, the awardee may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

#### **2. Changes in Project Plans**

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. Changes in approved goals or objectives shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests for such changes be approved which are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. Changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such changes.

d. Transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not Federal funds are involved, shall be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to effecting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended by CSREES without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) as the ADO determines may be necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed five years. Any extension of time shall be conditioned upon prior request by the awardee and approval in writing by the ADO, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of award.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the ADO prior to instituting such changes if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of



amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

### **C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of CSREES transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

### **D. Regulatory Information**

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

### **E. Definitions**

For the purpose of this program, the following definitions are applicable:

1862 Institution or 1862 Land-Grant Institution or 1862 College or University or 1862 Land-Grant College or University means one of those institutions eligible to receive funds under the Act of July 2, 1862 (12 Stat. 503, chapter 130; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

1890 Institution or 1890 Land-Grant Institution or 1890 College or University or 1890 Land-Grant College or University means one of those institutions eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 419, chapter 841, 7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.) including Tuskegee University and West Virginia State University.

1994 Institution or 1994 Land-Grant Institution means one of those institutions (named in the “Eligible Institutions” section of this solicitation) as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note) as amended. These institutions are commonly referred to as Tribal Colleges or Tribal Universities.

Administrator means the Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

Authorized departmental officer (ADO) means the Secretary or any employee of the Department who has the authority to issue or modify award instruments on behalf of the Secretary.

Authorized representative (AR) means the official who has the authority to commit the resources of the institution.

Award means the provision of funds by the Secretary to an entity to assist in meeting the costs of conducting, for the benefit of the public, an identified project which is intended and designed to accomplish the purpose of the program as identified in these Application Guidelines.

Awardee means the same as Grantee (see below).

Budget period means the interval of time (usually 12 months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

Cash contribution means the applicant's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the applicant by non-Federal third parties.

Citizen or national of the United States means (1) A citizen or native resident of a State, the District of Columbia, or any Insular Area; or, (2) a person defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22), who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States. Where eligibility is claimed solely on the basis of permanent allegiance, documentary evidence from the Immigration and Naturalization Service as to such eligibility must be made available to CSREES upon request.

College or university means an educational institution in any State which: (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which an associate degree or any other higher degree is awarded; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

Department means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Eligible institution(s) (see 1994 Institution or 1994 Land-Grant Institution.)

Food and agricultural sciences means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in the food, agricultural, renewable natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, in the broadest sense of these terms, including but not limited to, activities concerned with the production, processing, marketing, distribution, conservation, utilization, consumption, research, and development of food and agriculturally related products and services, and inclusive of programs in agriculture, natural resources, aquaculture, forestry, veterinary

medicine, home economics, rural human ecology, rural economic, community, or business development, and closely allied disciplines.

Grantee means the 1994 Institution designated in the grant award document as the responsible legal entity to which a grant is awarded.

Insular area means the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Virgin Islands of the United States.

Joint project application means an application for a project: (1) which will involve the applicant, a 1994 Institution, working in cooperation with one or more 1862 or 1890 Land-Grant Institution(s) AND one or more joint partner(s). A joint partner may include a college or university, unit of State or Tribal government, other Tribal College or University, or private sector organization with a demonstrable capacity to organize and conduct research. For joint project applications, the applicant institution, each cooperating institution, and each joint partner, must assume a substantial role in the conduct of the proposed project. **To demonstrate substantial involvement with the project, the applicant institution submitting a joint project must retain at least 30 percent but not more than 70 percent of the awarded funds, and no cooperating institution or joint partner may receive less than 10 percent of the funds.** Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of an eligible institution.

Matching or cost-sharing means that portion of project costs not borne by the Federal Government, including the value of in-kind contributions.

Peer review panel means a group of experts or consultants, qualified by training and experience in particular fields of science, education, or technology to give expert advice on the merit of grant applications in such fields, who evaluate eligible applications submitted to this program in their professional area(s) of expertise.

Prior approval means written approval evidencing prior consent by an ADO as defined in this section.

Private sector means all non-public entities including for-profit and non-profit commercial and non-commercial entities, and including private or independent educational associations.

Project means the particular research activity within the scope of one or more of the targeted areas supported by a grant awarded under this program.

Project Director means the single individual designated as the grantee in the grant application and approved by the Secretary who is responsible for the direction and management of the project.

Project period means the period, as stated in the award document and modifications thereto, if any, during which Federal sponsorship begins and ends.

Research means any systematic inquiry directed toward new or fuller knowledge and understanding of the subject studied.

Regular project application means an application for a project: (1) where the applicant institution and the 1862 or 1890 Land-Grant Institution cooperator will be the sole entities involved in the execution of the project; or (2) which will involve the applicant institution, the cooperator, and one or more other entities, but where the involvement of the other entity(ies) does not meet the requirements for a joint project application as defined in this section.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

State means any one of the fifty States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

Tribal College or Tribal University means an educational institution that: (1) satisfies the definition of a *college* or *university* as defined in this section, except that paragraphs (2) and (5) of such definition shall not apply; (2) is formally controlled, or has been formally sanctioned, or chartered, by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes, except that no more than one such institution shall be recognized with respect to any such tribe; and (3) is an institution listed in the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994.

Tribally Controlled College or Tribally Controlled University means the same as Tribal College or Tribal University (see above).

Tribe means any of the groups of Native Americans having origins in the original peoples of North America that are recognized by the Federal government.

United States means the several States, the territories and possessions of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

Units of State government means all state institutions, including the formal divisions of State government (i.e., the official state agencies such as departments of transportation and education), local government agencies (e.g., a county human services office), and including individual state educational institutions (e.g., public colleges and universities).

USDA means the United States Department of Agriculture.

## **F. CSREES' Grants.gov Implementation Plans**

CSREES is continuing to develop its capacity to exchange proposal and grant data electronically with its grantees through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and to process, review, and award proposals and grants electronically.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, CSREES offered an electronic application option for select grant programs and partnered with five institutions to use Grants.gov Apply. CSREES utilized the SF-

424 R&R (Research and Related) forms package (see 70 FR 9656, published in the Federal Register on February 28, 2005) along with CSREES Agency-specific forms and instructions to receive the electronic applications. These pilot activities were successful and provided lessons for applicants and CSREES.

As a result, for the FY 2007 (October 1, 2006-September 30, 2007) cycle, CSREES is requiring electronic submission through Grants.gov for some programs while providing a Grants.gov option for others. Please visit <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/fy07changes.html> for information about FY 2007 submission requirements by program. For more information about CSREES' Grants.gov plans, including important announcements, program implementation, and detailed requirements, see the CSREES' web site, [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/other\\_links/egov/egov.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/other_links/egov/egov.html). The information on these web sites will be updated as appropriate. It is suggested that the sites be visited periodically for important updates.

## **G. DUNS Number**

A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. A Federal Register notice of final policy issuance (68 FR 38402) requires a DUNS number in every application (i.e., hard copy and electronic) for a grant or cooperative agreement (except applications from individuals) submitted on or after October 1, 2003. Therefore, project directors should contact an AOR to obtain the DUNS number or have the AOR begin the steps needed to obtain one.

For information about how to obtain a DUNS number go to <http://www.grants.gov/RequestaDUNS>. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.